

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, and 22-42 are pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, and 22-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. patent 4,760,606 to Lesnick et al. (herein “Lesnick”) in view of U.S. patent 5,666,490 to Gillings et al. (herein “Gillings”) and further in view of Microsoft Publication “Getting Results with Microsoft Office 97”, 1997, pp. 376-381 (herein “Microsoft Office”).

Initially, applicants note the claims are amended by the present response to clarify features recited therein. Specifically, independent claim 1 now refers to “image data” at appropriate portions. Independent claim 1 now also clarifies that the scanner is connected to the image information storing server “not through the users”. Independent claim 1 now also consistently refers to the “scanner” receiving the image data. The other independent claims are similarly amended. No new matter is believed to be added.

Applicants respectfully submit that first no combination of teachings of Lesnick in view of Gillings and further in view of Microsoft Office fully meets all of the claim limitations. Applicants also respectfully submit that such a combination of teachings would not have been suggested to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Independent claim 1 specifically recites the image information server “configured to store (1) registered group names and corresponding user names for each respective group name and (2) image data in various folders to be read by the plurality of users”. Independent claim 1 also now further recites “wherein when the first sheet of format image data indicates a group name, a controller determines if the group name is registered, and if the group name is registered, the image information server stores the sheet image data in an applicable folder or file of each registered user corresponding to the group name”. The other independent

claims recite similar features. Such features are believed to clearly distinguish over the applied art.

With respect to the above-noted features the outstanding Office Action appears to cite the Microsoft Office reference, specifically stating “Office teaches creating a personal distribution list, containing the names of every one in the distribution group” (page 388).¹

In reply to that basis for the outstanding rejection, applicants note the Microsoft Office does not disclose or suggest the claimed features and thus does not cure the deficiencies of Lesnick in view of Gillings. Specifically, the Microsoft Office merely discloses providing distribution lists for e-mail messages. In the Microsoft Office system the user must select to which distribution list to send data.

In contrast to the operation in the Microsoft Office, in the claims a specific “first sheet of format image data indicates a group name”, and then the “controller determines if the group name is registered, and if the group name is registered, the image information server stores the document image data in an applicable folder or file of each registered user corresponding to the group name”. That is, in the claims a determination is made as to whether a specific document includes a group name, and if the group name is registered. The Microsoft Office has no even similar operation. In the Microsoft Office a user must set up a personal distribution list. Microsoft Office does not have any operation to automatically indicate whether any distribution list is registered, or much less whether any document or input includes a group name.

The Microsoft Office thus does not disclose or suggest reading a group name and determining if a group name is registered, and if registered then sending data to each user in the group distribution list. Instead in the Microsoft Office a user must input names to be

¹ Office Action of August 30, 2006, bottom of page 4 and middle of page 5.

added to a group name, but no determination at all is made as to whether any input includes a group name.

In such ways, the Microsoft Office disclosure is not at all related to the claimed features, and even if combined with the teachings in Lesnick and Gillings the above-noted claim features would not have been realized. For such reasons the claims clearly distinguish over the applied art.

Moreover, applicants respectfully submit the disclosure in the Microsoft Office is not properly applicable to the teachings of Lesnick and Gillings with respect to the claimed features.

The claims are directed to an image scanning technology. In contrast the Microsoft Office employs a typical computer network technology with a keyboard, a dialog box, a program, etc. In the Microsoft Office system a group address is associated with user addresses only utilizing a keyboard of a PC.

In contrast to such systems in the Microsoft Office, the claims recite a format sheet being read by a scanner, as now further clarified in each of the claims. Thus, in the claims a group name inputting is executed at a different device and accordingly at a different place than in a Microsoft Office. In the claims the group name inputting is executed at a scanner. In the Microsoft Office the only group name inputting is at a PC. The Microsoft Office requires the use of keyboard to even make such an entry.

In the Microsoft Office system the user must walk to a PC and input a group name or the like using a keyboard after scanning an image with a scanner, and thereby inputting such a group name or user name becomes a more time consuming and difficult operation.

Such disclosures in the Microsoft Office have no relevance whatsoever to Lesnick or Gillings beyond noting that a distribution list can be made for an e-mail. As discussed above in detail, the claims are not directed to a user setting up an e-mail for a distribution.

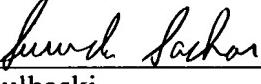
Thereby, for such further reasons the claims as written are believed to clearly distinguish over Lesnick in view of Gillings and Microsoft Office.

In view of the present response applicants respectfully submit the claims as written are allowable.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

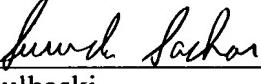
Respectfully submitted,

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